



AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

Claim 1. (*Canceled*)

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Claim 2. (*Canceled*)

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Claim 3. (*Previously Presented*) A retaining element according to claim 12, wherein the vertical distance between the upper surface of the support device and the sole-clamp is comprised between 20 and 28 millimeters.

Claim 4. (*Original*) A retaining element according to claim 3, wherein the vertical distance between the upper surface of the support device and the sole-clamp is approximately 24 millimeters.

Claim 5. (*Previously Presented*) A retaining element according to claim 12, wherein the rear zone of the mounting base has two substantially parallel arms that are lower in relation to the front zone.

Claim 6. (*Previously Presented*) A retaining element according to claim 12, wherein the mounting base rests on a two-level spacer.

Claim 7. (*Previously Presented*) A retaining element according to claim 12, wherein the support device is constructed to be movable.

Claim 8. (*Original*) A retaining element according to claim 7, wherein the support device is a support element mounted for rocking movement about a median longitudinal and horizontal axle carried by a support.

Claim 9. (*Original*) A retaining element according to claim 7, wherein the support device is a support element movable laterally on both sides of a centered position.

Claim 10. (*Original*) A retaining element according to claim 7, wherein the support device is an endless band sliding on a zone of reduced cross-section of the rear zone of the mounting base.

Claim 11. (*Previously Presented*) A retaining element according to claim 6, wherein said two levels of said spacer have respective upper surfaces differing in height by said distance of between 4 and 10 millimeters.

Claim 12. (*Previously Presented*) A retaining element to retain a front end of a sole of a ski boot, said retaining element comprising:

a mounting base including a front zone and a rear zone, the front zone being raised with respect to the rear zone by a distance of between 4 and 10 millimeters compared to front and rear zones of a retaining element constructed to receive boots according to standard DIN 7880 Parts I and II;

a support device to support the boot sole, the support device being positioned on the rear zone of the mounting base;

a body positioned on the front zone of the mounting base;

a jaw supported by the body, the jaw having a sole clamp for vertical retention of the boot sole, the rear zone of the mounting base extending rearward of the jaw.

Claim 13. (*Previously Presented*) A retaining element according to claim 12, further comprising at least one bore in the rear zone of the mounting base for receiving at least one screw for assembling the mounting base with respect to the ski.

Claim 14. (*Previously Presented*) A retaining element according to claim 13, wherein the mounting base has a unitary construction.

Claim 15. (*Previously Presented*) A retaining element according to claim 13, wherein the mounting base and the body are formed in a unitary construction.

Claim 16. (*Previously Presented*) A retaining element according to claim 13, wherein the front and rear zones of the mounting base extend along a common longitudinal direction.

Claim 17. (*Currently Amended*) A retaining element to retain a front end of a sole of a ski boot, said retaining element comprising:

a mounting base including a front zone and a rear zone;

a support device having an upper surface to support the boot sole, the support device being positioned on the rear zone of the mounting base;

a body positioned on the front zone of the mounting base;

a jaw supported by the body, the jaw having a sole clamp for vertical retention of the boot sole, the rear zone of the mounting base extending rearward of the jaw;

the upper surface of the support device and the sole clamp being spaced apart vertically by a distance within a range of between greater than 20 millimeters to ~~and~~ 28 millimeters.

Claim 18. (*Previously Presented*) A retaining element according to claim 17, wherein the upper surface of the support device and the sole clamp are spaced apart vertically by a distance of approximately 24 millimeters.

Claim 19. (*Previously Presented*) A retaining element according to claim 17, further comprising at least one bore in the rear zone of the mounting base for receiving at least one screw for assembling the mounting base with respect to the ski.

Claim 20. (*Previously Presented*) A retaining element according to claim 19, wherein the mounting base has a unitary construction.

Claim 21. (*Previously Presented*) A retaining element according to claim 19, wherein the mounting base and the body are formed in a unitary construction.

Claim 22. (*Previously Presented*) A retaining element according to claim 19, wherein the front and rear zones of the mounting base extend along a common longitudinal direction.

Claim 23. (*Previously Presented*) A retaining element according to claim 19, wherein the front zone is raised with respect to the rear zone by a distance of between 4 and 10 millimeters compared to front and rear zones of a retaining element constructed to receive boots according to standard DIN 7880 Parts I and II.

Claim 24. (*Previously Presented*) A retaining element according to claim 19, wherein the rear zone of the mounting base has two substantially parallel arms that are lower in relation to the front zone.

Claim 25. (*Previously Presented*) A retaining element according to claim 19, wherein the mounting base rests on a two-level spacer.

Claim 26. (*Previously Presented*) A retaining element according to claim 25, wherein said two levels of said spacer have respective upper surfaces differing in height by said distance of between 4 and 10 millimeters.

Claim 27. (*Previously Presented*) A retaining element according to claim 19, wherein the support device is constructed to be movable.

Claim 28. (*Previously Presented*) A retaining element according to claim 27, wherein the support device is a support element mounted for rocking movement about a median longitudinal and horizontal axle carried by a support.

Claim 29. (*Previously Presented*) A retaining element according to claim 27, wherein the support device is a support element movable laterally on both sides of a centered position.

Claim 30. (*Previously Presented*) A retaining element according to claim 27, wherein the support device is an endless band sliding on a zone of reduced cross-section of the rear zone of the mounting base.

Claim 31. (*Previously Presented*) A retaining element provided to retain the front of a boot sole on a ski, said retaining element comprising:

a jaw having a sole-clamp for vertical retention of the boot sole, a body supporting the jaw, the body being mounted on a mounting base provided to be affixedly connected to the ski, the mounting base having, toward a rear of the jaw, at least one bore provided for a screw for assembling the mounting base to the ski, and a support device to receive the support of the boot sole, the mounting base including a front zone and a rear zone, the rear zone extending rearward of the jaw, the body being positioned on the front zone, the at least one bore and the support device being located in the rear zone;

the retaining element further comprising a two-level spacer, the mounting base being supported by the two-level spacer, with the rear zone of the mounting base being lower than the front zone.

Claim 32. (*Previously Presented*) A retaining element according to claim 31, wherein the rear zone is lower than the front zone by a distance of between 4 and 10 millimeters.

Claim 33. (*Previously Presented*) A retaining element according to claim 32, wherein the support device and the sole-clamp have respective surfaces vertically spaced apart by a distance of between 20 and 28 millimeters.

Claim 34. (*Previously Presented*) A retaining element according to claim 31, wherein the support device and the sole-clamp have respective surfaces vertically spaced apart by a distance of between 20 and 28 millimeters.

Claim 35. (*Previously Presented*) A retaining element according to claim 31, wherein the support device and the sole-clamp have respective surfaces vertically spaced apart by a distance of approximately 24 millimeters.